

Storm Allison, just weeks into the hurricane season, flooded tens of thousands of homes and businesses in Southeast Texas. The Guard was a critical part of the rescue and recovery effort, using its large trucks and equipment to reach individuals stranded by the high water. During Katrina and Rita, the Guard again played a major role in rescue and recovery efforts after a natural disaster.

With the start of hurricane season on June 1st—less than three months away—we must ensure Guard units along the Gulf coast have the equipment they need to save lives.

I also want to talk about housing for Katrina and Rita evacuees. We have 100,000 evacuees in the City of Houston's emergency housing program, but frankly FEMA and HUD have been very difficult to work with.

FEMA told the City to sign 1-year leases for evacuees and promised in writing to reimburse Houston. First, these reimbursements have been extremely slow, and the our cities and apartments are becoming the bank for FEMA.

I met with Houston apartment owners that have not been paid rent for 90 days—I could not get away with that in my apartment in D.C., but FEMA gets away with it.

Second, these commitments are not being honored. Instead, they are going to pull the rug out from under probably 30,000 of these evacuees that FEMA says won't qualify for housing help after March 31.

In the coming weeks, 30,000 evacuees in Houston are going to get a letter giving them 30 days notice before eviction, even if they have a 1-year lease that FEMA promised to reimburse back in September. Many of these evacuees are schoolchildren.

FEMA has no plan for where the folks that they decide no longer qualify for housing assistance are going to find housing or where they are going to go. Rental rates are going to go up due to the influx of evacuees. Houston's section 8 housing program is full.

30,000 Americans should not end up on the streets of Houston and America should not stand for it. FEMA made commitments to 1-year leases and they are not abiding by their written commitments.

Mr. Chairman, I fully support the hurricane relief funding in this bill and the funding for the men and women in Iraq and Afghanistan, but I believe that there is a tremendous amount of work yet to be done.

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Chairman, I rise to support the amendments by my colleagues in Texas, Mr. HINOJOSA and Mr. DOGGETT; our levee system in South Texas has long passed the point of insufficient—we are in an emergency situation.

The Lower Rio Grande Flood Control Project has several components, including the levee system along the Rio Grande, which is in a state of disrepair. This amendment provides \$10 million for IBWC; it has no effect on budget authority; and it reduces outlays by \$2 million for FY 2006.

The integrity of the 500 mile levee system is the responsibility of the Army Corp of Engineers and the International Boundary and Water Commission. The IBWC has not received any consistent federal funding necessary to rehabilitate this critical levee system.

An indirect impact from Hurricane Emily last September brought water levels along the South border to critical levels that we have not seen in decades.

It was Hurricane Katrina that gave each American a tutorial on the utter importance of

levees when it comes to protecting U.S. lives and property.

In the 2 major storms that blew ashore last fall, Katrina gave us a glimpse of the damage possible if these levees are not repaired . . . and Emily that made us hold our collective breath as the waters rose near the top of the levee system.

Like New Orleans, the population protected by these levees is enormous. South Texas is a densely populated area, and is the front door of international trade. Millions of lives and the nation's economy could hang in the balance when these levees fail. Evaluations of the present condition of these levees conclude the system is deficient in both hydraulic capacity and structural integrity.

The investment we ask to include today as part of this emergency supplemental is a small price to pay to ensure the integrity of these levees when we have the next major hurricane. Hurricane season is rapidly approaching, and this is the last opportunity to fix the levee system before hurricanes start blowing into the Gulf. Let us not be penny wise and pound foolish about the dangers that await us, as we were with the New Orleans levees.

We know the damage that can happen . . . and we know it will only come at a profoundly bad time, as millions of residents are trying to flee the coast . . . and the U.S. economy takes a multi billion dollar hit.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this legislation, which makes “emergencies” out of non-emergencies and fails to provide assistance to my home State of Texas, which did suffer an emergency in the form of Hurricane Rita last summer.

First, I should note to my colleagues and the American taxpayer that, at almost \$92 billion, this is the largest supplemental appropriations request in the history of the U.S. Congress.

Is it really an emergency to send \$1.2 billion to pay off our allies for their help in Afghanistan? Won't these countries in close proximity presumably benefit more than even we will from the stability that we are told U.S. troops will provide? Perhaps these countries should be paying us for stabilizing their neighborhood. But no, it is always the U.S. taxpayer who ends up paying.

Is \$36 million more for taxpayer-funded broadcasting programs overseas really an emergency?

Is \$30 million to build roads in Liberia an emergency, when roads in Texas are still unrepaired after Hurricane Rita?

Mr. Chairman, I am offering an amendment to this “emergency” supplemental that reduces some of the non-emergency “emergencies” by \$500 million and allocates that money for the recovery of the State of Texas from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Additionally, my amendment will take another half-billion dollars from the non-emergency portions of this bill and apply it toward the Federal deficit.

The real emergency is the rate that this government is spending money we do not have on policies that we cannot afford while ignoring what should be our real priorities.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Chairman, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Chairman, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The Acting CHAIRMAN (Mr. BOOZMAN). All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule. When the reading for amendment reaches title II, that title shall be considered read.

Pursuant to the order of the House of today, the following amendments may be offered at any point in the reading:

An amendment by Mr. GILCHREST, regarding section 3011;

An amendment by Mr. SABO, regarding the Defense Production Act.

Each amendment may be offered only by the Member named in the request or a designee, shall be considered read, shall not be subject to amendment except that the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations each may offer one pro forma amendment for the purpose of debate; shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question; and shall be debatable for 20 minutes, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent.

During consideration of the bill for amendment, the Chair may accord priority in recognition to a Member offering an amendment that he has printed in the designated place in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. Those amendments will be considered read.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4939

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the following sums are appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006, and for other purposes, namely:

TITLE I—GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS CHAPTER 1

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL SERVICE PUBLIC LAW 480 TITLE II GRANTS

For an additional expenses for “Public Law 480 Title II Grants”, during the current fiscal year, not otherwise recoverable, and unrecovered prior years’ costs, including interest thereon, under the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954, for commodities supplied in connection with dispositions abroad under title II of said Act, \$350,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That the amount provided under this heading is designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 402 of H. Con. Res. 95 (109th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2006.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MR. GILCHREST

Mr. GILCHREST. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment offered by Mr. GILCHREST.
Strike section 3011.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the order of the House today, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. GILCHREST) and a Member opposed each will control 10 minutes.